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SKETCH OF MR. WILLIAM PENN.

In the Edinburgh Review for July 1813 we have a review of "Clarkson's Life of William Penn." This is the source of the information which we shall now exhibit respecting one of the most eminent characters of the sect called Quakers or Friends.

WILLIAM PENN was born in 1644, and was the only son of Admiral Sir W. Penn. At about sixteen years of age, while a member of College at Oxford, his mind was impressed in favor of the opinions of the Quakers, by the preaching of Mr. Thomas Loe. He ceased to attend worship at the Chapel, and in connexion with a few others, held prayer meetings in private apartments. For this he was admonished by his superiors. About the same time, an order came from the Court to resume the use of the surplice. To this order, young Penn refused to submit; and for some conduct on that occasion, which was hardly consistent with that meekness, which his own principles should have exacted, he was expelled from the University. He returned home and attempted by arguments to vindicate his conduct. This brought on him the displeasure of his father, who turned him out

of his house. Several methods were adopted by the Admiral to recover his son, and to bring him back to his former way of thinking, but they were all in vain. The son gave up secular occupations, and made devotion the business of life.

The reign of Charles the II was unfavorable to dissenters, and Penn was imprisoned for attending the meetings of Quakers; but he was pretty soon set at liberty. When he returned to his father, he had a long disputation on the subject of his new creed. The father agreed that William should enjoy his opinions unmolested, if he would consent to sit with his hat off in the presence of the King, the Duke of Ormond, and himself. The son considered the matter for several days, and then answered, "that his conscience would not comport with any species of *hat worship*:" For this he was again turned out of doors.

William now began to preach in the Quaker meetings, and entered on that course of theological and controversial publications, which he pursued through life. On publishing a piece, en-

titled "The sandy foundation Shaken," he was committed to the Tower. During this confinement, he wrote six other pamphlets. Soon after his release from the tower, he was again taken up, and brought for trial before the Lord Mayor of London, and the Recorder, for preaching in a Quaker meeting. As he was entering the court, with his hat on, the door keeper took it off. The Mayor was enraged, and ordered the hat to be replaced, and then fined the prisoner for appearing with his hat on. Mr. Penn insisted on knowing what law he had broken. This led to some altercation; and the Recorder in an imperious tone thus addressed him, "I tell you to be silent: if we should suffer you to ask questions till to-morrow morning, you would be never the wiser." "That is," replied Penn, "according as *the answers are.*" Upon this he was ordered to Bale Dock, a filthy dungeon. During the absence of Mr. Penn, the jury received an animated charge. They however brought in this verdict, "Guilty of *speaking* in Grace Church street." They were loaded with reproaches, and sent out again to amend their verdict. In half an hour they returned with the same fairly written out, and subscribed with all their names. They were then ordered to be shut up for the night without meat, drink, or fire. In the morning, they came with the same verdict as before. After some menacing and vindictive language, they were sent back, and kept twenty four hours without refreshment. On the third day, they returned

a verdict, in which with one voice they declared the prisoner "*not guilty.*" Prior to this Mr. Penn had been released from the dungeon; he now demanded his liberty; but he was ordered again to Bale Dock, until he should pay the fine for wearing his hat in the presence of the court. He positively refused to acknowledge the legality of the proceeding by paying the fine; but his father privately sent the money, and set him at liberty.

The abusive treatment Mr. Penn received, had no tendency to convince him of error on his own part. He persisted in his course, and in less than a year, he was again brought before a magistrate, on an accusation for *illegal preaching*. He was again likely to get clear, for want of evidence to support the charge; but the magistrate, probably to entangle him, tendered the oath of allegiance. Mr. Penn offered to assign reasons for not swearing, but the magistrate would not hear them, and insinuated something against the moral character of the prisoner. This was resented by Mr. Penn, and after challenging any person justly to accuse him, he said to the magistrate, "Thy words shall be thy burthen, and I trample thy slander as dirt under my feet." Upon this he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment in Newgate. From this prison he issued four new publications in defence of his opinions. He was often imprisoned, and new pamphlets were the consequence, so that for a number of years, he published at least six pamphlets every year. His virtues and his

sufferings overcame his father's objections, and before the death of the father, a cordial reconciliation took place between them.

On the decease of Admiral Penn, his son was heir to an estate which yielded him fifteen thousand pounds sterling a year. He however still persevered in his plain way of living, and his course of preaching and writing. In the midst of his labors and sufferings, "he married a lady of great beauty and accomplishments." When an act was about to be passed against the papists, which exposed to punishment all who did not frequent the established church, or would not *upon oath* clear themselves from popery, Mr. Penn by permission appeared before a committee of the House of Commons in behalf of the Quakers. Notwithstanding the strong prejudices which then existed against the papists, Mr. Penn had fortitude enough to state to the House of Commons, "that it was unlawful to inflict punishment upon Catholics themselves for a conscientious dissent." In respect to the Quakers, he defended their cause on the ground, that they were strictly protestants. At the close of his plea he said; "We think we are an useful people. We are sure we are a peaceable people; yet if we must suffer, let us not suffer as popish recusants, but as protestant dissenters."

Not long after this Mr. Penn was induced to purchase the land now called Pennsylvania. This he intended should be an asylum for the oppressed of every sect. Part of the land had been grant-

ed to Lord Berkeley, and by him sold to a Quaker, whose circumstances had become embarrassed, and who wished Mr. Penn to assist him. In addition to this, Mr. Penn desired more territory. The Government was indebted to his father to the amount of 16,000*l*. For this Mr. Penn agreed to accept a grant of land, which he obtained with such ample powers of administration as made him little less than a sovereign. The charter was made out on the 4th of March 1681, and in compliance with the king's desire it was called Pennsylvania. The right of legislation was entirely with Mr. Penn and such Council as he should appoint, with this reserve, that his laws were liable to be rescinded by the Privy Council of England within six months after they were reported to it.

Mr. Penn now proceeded to encourage settlers, and especially such as viewed themselves oppressed. He published certain conditions and regulations, that people might know what they had to expect under his government. A fundamental principle was this, "That every person shall enjoy the free profession of his faith, and exercise worship towards God in such way as he shall in conscience believe is most acceptable; and shall be protected in this liberty by the authority of the civil Magistrate." With regard to the Indians he positively enacted that "whoever shall hurt, wrong, or offend any Indian, shall incur the same penalty, as if he had offended in like manner against his fellow planter." Before the close of

the year, three ships filled with passengers sailed for the new province. In one of these ships Col. Markman was sent, as chief of the commissioners appointed to confer with the Indians in respect to the purchase of their lands, and the terms of a perpetual peace. He was the bearer of a letter from Mr. Penn to the natives, which was expressive of piety and benevolence, and well calculated to gain the friendship and confidence of the Indian tribes.

The following year Mr. Penn, with about a hundred of his sect, came over to Pennsylvania. He did not consider his charter from the King as giving him any right to dispossess the Indians. By his commissioners he had made an arrangement for a purchase of a part of the lands, which was to be ratified in a meeting of the natives and the English settlers. At a time appointed, and near the place where Philadelphia now stands, there was a grand convocation of the Indian tribes, who appeared with "brandished arms"—Mr. Penn with a few of his friends, and unarmed, went out to meet them. In his right hand he held a roll of parchment on which was engrossed the confirmation of the treaty. On his approach the Indians threw down their arms and seated themselves in companies on the ground. The presiding Chief informed Mr. Penn that the Indians were now ready to hear him. He proceeded in a most amicable and impressive manner, to state to them his friendly feelings towards them, and his desire to live with them in love and harmony. He

unrolled his parchment, and by the help of an interpreter communicated to them the several articles of the treaty, as they related to the purchase and the compact for peace and union. He paid them for their land and gave them presents; and finally presented to them the roll, desiring the Chiefs to keep it carefully for three generations, that their children might know what had passed between them. The Indians in return made long harangues and "pledged themselves to live in love with William Penn and his children as long as the sun and moon should endure."

In speaking of this treaty, Voltaire observed, "It is the only one ever concluded between savages and christians which was not ratified by an oath—and the only one that was never broken." On the subject of this treaty and the character of the Quakers we shall quote one paragraph entire from the *Edinburgh Review*, which we hope will be duly considered by all who shall read this sketch:—

"Such indeed was the spirit in which the negotiation was entered into, and the corresponding settlement conducted, that for the space of more than seventy years—and so long indeed as the Quakers retained the chief power in the government, the peace and amity which had been thus solemnly promised and concluded, never was violated;—and a large and most striking, though solitary example afforded, of the facility with which they who are really sincere and friendly in their views, may live

in harmony even with those who are supposed to be peculiarly fierce and faithless. We cannot bring ourselves to wish that there were nothing but Quakers in the world—because we fear it would be insupportably dull;—but when we consider what tremendous evils daily arise from the petulance, and profligacy, and ambition, and irritability of sovereigns and ministers, we cannot help thinking it would be the most efficacious of all reforms to choose all those ruling personages out of that plain, pacific, and sober minded sect.”

As our limits require conciseness, we shall close the narrative in the language of the review. “W. Penn returned to England after a residence of about two years in his colony—got into great favour with James the II, and was bitterly calumniated as a Jesuit, both by churchmen and sectaries—went on doing good and preaching Quakerism—was sorely persecuted and insulted, and deprived of his Government, but finally acquitted and honorably restored under

King William—lost his wife and son—travelled and married again—returned to Pennsylvania in 1699 for two years longer—came finally home to England—continued to preach and to publish as copiously as ever—was reduced to a state of kindly dotage by three strokes of the apoplexy—and died at last at the age of seventy-two, in the year 1718.—He seems to have been a man of kind affections, singular activity and perseverance, and great practical wisdom.”

The imperfections of Mr. Penn we leave to be recorded by those who are without faults, and shall only make two brief reflections:—

1. How much it is to be lamented that a sect so pacific and soberminded, “should ever have been persecuted by any who bore the name of christians!

2. How careful should we all be in our treatment of the different sects, lest through the influence of prejudice and false information, we do that which posterity will censure, and which God will finally condemn.

Illustrations of passages in the New Testament, which refer to sentiments &c. among the Jews in the time of our Savior.

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John iii. 1—21.

Our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus.

It does not consist with the limits which must be prescribed to these illustrations, to dilate upon the subjects to which we call the attention of our readers, nor to indulge freely in practical

inferences. We hope only, by enabling some to understand the expressions and sentiments of the gospel, to assist them in making these inferences for themselves. It is of very great importance, to understand precisely what was intended by our Lord, in the instructions which he has left for his disciples; and the examples

are not few, in which we must enter into the characters, sentiments, and feelings of those about him, and whom he was addressing, correctly to conceive of his meaning. Of this kind, I think, is his conversation with Nicodemus, on which we are to offer a few observations.

1. Nicodemus, "a Pharisee," "a ruler of the Jews," a member of the Sanhedrim, was convinced by the "miracles" of Jesus, that he must be "a teacher from God;" because "no man could do the miracles which he did, except God were with him." In recurring to the preceding chapter, we find that at the passover, which immediately followed his expulsion of the buyers and sellers from the temple, "many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did." Of most of these miracles, we may believe, that Nicodemus had been a witness. They were unquestionable evidences of divine cooperation. It was from the impulse of convictions so produced, that he determined to go to Jesus.

2. Nicodemus went to our Lord *by night*. He was, without doubt, afraid to go in the day. The recent offence which Jesus had given, by breaking up the market in the temple, had probably exasperated the Sanhedrim against him. But the facts, that no open resistance was made to him, and that a man so distinguished as Nicodemus, should have been convinced of the divine authority by which he acted and have come to him, and acknowledged that authority, speak

volumes in attestation of the power and character of Christ. What had yet passed concerning our Lord in the Sanhedrim, we know not; but it is probable that, unable as they were to convict him of wrong, they had even now begun to form their plans of opposition. Thence Nicodemus went to him *by night*. This circumstance demands particular notice, because our Lord alludes to it, and because it will assist us in understanding the conversation.

3. It is by no means probable that all which passed between our Lord and Nicodemus is related by the evangelist. The expression, "*we know*," seems to imply that something may have been said, relative to the sentiments of others concerning him, and perhaps of some of the Sanhedrim. It is thought that Nicodemus had proposed some inquiry to our Lord, concerning *the kingdom of God, or the reign of the Messiah*, which was the immediate cause of the reply, "except a man be born again, he cannot see," or enter "*the kingdom of God*." But his acknowledgment of Jesus as "*a teacher come from God*," does not necessarily imply an acknowledgment of him as *the Messiah*. He probably did not intend to make this acknowledgment; for even if he had been "almost persuaded," the same fear, which made him go to Jesus *by night*, would restrain him likewise from an explicit avowal of his sentiments. It is to be considered likewise, that the Jews expected the resurrection of some of their prophets,

at the time of the Messiah;* and Nicodemus might rather have believed our Lord to be one of them, than that he was himself the expected redeemer of Israel. His disciples had indeed acknowledged Jesus in this character; but as we find that, at a considerable time afterwards, some supposed him to be "*Jeremias, or one of the prophets,*" it would not be surprising if Nicodemus, at this early season of our Lord's appearance, should have adopted a similar opinion concerning him.

4. As it cannot be doubted that Nicodemus, like the rest of his countrymen, had been looking for the Messiah, so it is to be considered, that he had the same sentiments concerning him, which were common in his nation. He expected a *temporal* prince, and a *temporal* kingdom; a Messiah *exclusively of the Jews*; and the *perpetuity of the institutions of Moses*. He expected that every Israelite, by his descent from the Father of the faithful, would immediately, and of course be a subject of the Messiah's kingdom. With this knowledge of the state of his mind, we are prepared to see him astonished, confounded by the reply, "*verily, verily I say unto thee, EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN, he cannot SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD.*" It was a common expression among the Jews, "he that is made a proselyte, is as a new born child;" "he hath a new soul." But it had not entered into the thoughts of Nicodemus, that a Jew was to become a *proselyte to a new re-*

ligion, under the reign of the Messiah; and for an Israelite to be *born again*, it would have seemed to any Jew, as it did to him, that he must "enter into his mother's womb and be born." In accomodation to this prejudice, our Lord explained his meaning more plainly by saying, "*verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*" Nicodemus well knew, that to be *born of water*, was to be *baptized*; and that a heathen, converted to Judaism, received baptism, at once as a profession of his new faith, and as a symbol of his new birth. But nothing could have been more directly opposed to his prejudices as a Jew, than the doctrine that an Israelite must be a *proselyte*, a *convert*, in entering the kingdom of the Messiah; and as a symbol of regeneration, receive baptism.

It is worthy of remark, that when John the Baptist called men to prepare for the Messiah, he called them to *repentance*; (Matth. iii. 1 and 2.) and when our Lord sent out the apostles to "preach, saying, *the kingdom of heaven is at hand,*" "they went out and preached that men should *repent.*" (Comp. Matth. x. 7, and Mark vi. 12.) Why then is a different phraseology adopted, in addressing Nicodemus? I believe principally from the circumstances that Nicodemus came to our Lord *in the night*; and that the immediate design was, as well to reprove this timid, this worldly

* See Illustration 28; and compare with this fact, the answer of the disciples to our Lord to the question, "whom do men say that I am?" "some say Elias, &c." Matth. xvi. 14.

spirit of the Jewish ruler, who had not courage to expose himself to the inquiries of his Jewish brethren, by *openly* applying to our Lord, as to instruct him in the nature and excellence of the new dispensation. In this view of the expressions, "*verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,*" they imply, "you have come to me, Nicodemus, under the cover of night. But the gospel which I bring is light—it is open as the day, and dreads no scrutiny. If then you would enter the kingdom of Messiah, and become his disciple, you must not fear *openly, and in the day*, to profess your conviction, that I am "a teacher from God." If you would receive the Messiah, you must not dread such an acknowledgment of him as a heathen makes of the law of Moses, when he receives baptism. A man *ashamed, or afraid* to receive whom God hath sent, even by the most public acknowledgment which can be made of him, cannot enter his kingdom;—is unworthy to be his disciple.

To be "*born of the spirit*" is, I believe, a phrase peculiar to the New Testament; and is generally thought to imply a spiritual, in opposition to a natural birth. But with great diffidence would I suggest the conjecture, whether our Lord, in the expressions, "*that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit,*" did not rather intend to characterize the mosaic and christian dispensations, and to correct the Jewish prejudices of Nicodemus concern-

ing the Messiah's kingdom. It was, we know, the boast of the Jews, "*we have Abraham to our father.*" But it was to be the glory of christians, "*ONE is our Father, who is in heaven*" Jews therefore, on account of their glorying in a worldly descent, their gross conceptions of the Messiah and their exclusive and separating dispositions, are said to be *born of the flesh*. Besides, theirs was, to a great extent, a religion of the senses. It consisted much of external rights; and by many it is thought entirely of temporal sanctions.* The gospel was a spiritual dispensation, receiving scarcely any aid from the senses,—assuring peculiar aids of the spirit of God to those who received it,—intended to raise their hopes, their affections, and their fears above sensible objects, and placing its rewards and punishments in the future and eternal life which awaits us. In this view of the expressions, "*that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit,*" they greatly illustrate, as was without doubt the intention of our Lord, the expressions immediately preceding; "*except a man BE BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*" We may suppose him to mean, and Nicodemus to understand, that very different sentiments than those which Jews had entertained, were necessary to enable them to enter the kingdom of the Messiah; that a very different dispensation from Judaism was now introduced; and that a descent from Abraham gave no

* See Warburton's Divine Legation.

peculiar claim to its privileges;—that a more spiritual service was now to be instituted; and that it was this difference, and this superiority in the character of christianity, which made new sentiments, new affections, and a new character necessary, even in the children of Abraham. Hence they must be *born of water*; that is, initiated into christianity, as heathens were into Judaism, by baptism, in which the most open profession was made of their new faith;—and *born of the spirit*; that is, become “spiritually minded;” “transformed by the renewing of their minds.” When Nicodemus said, “*how can these things be?*” he did not imply, as he did before, that he did not comprehend our Lord; but his deep surprise that the Messiah’s kingdom should be so different from what he had expected that it would be, and that such conditions were required for admission to it. It was the suggestion rather of infidelity, than of misapprehension; as our Lord plainly intimated when he said to him, “if I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?” In thus characterizing his religion, and comparing it with Judaism, our Lord at the same time teaches the more admirable genius and tendency of christianity, and the importance of spiritual agency, in forming a christian character. In proportion as we discern that ours is a spiritual religion, and desire ourselves to become christians, we shall know the importance, the inestimable worth of the promise, “*your heavenly Father will give*

the holy spirit to them that ask him.”

The reproof and the instruction must have been keenly felt by a mind like that of Nicodemus. He could not but feel, how deficient he was in the qualifications for the Messiah’s kingdom; and that he yet knew little of that *spiritual influence*, which, though itself *unseen*, as is the wind, is known by its *effects*. Even if he was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, he must have felt that, to enter a spiritual kingdom, such as our Lord had described, Jews as well as heathens must be *born again*; and in looking upon his nation, and comparing them with this kingdom, how forcible to his mind must have been the sentiments, that they indeed *hated such light*, neither would come to it, lest their deeds should be *reproved*, or discovered. But the effects of the conversation were not momentary. He went away, with his prejudices greatly shaken. He was still indeed a member of the Sanhedrim, and therefore not an avowed disciple. But at a time when the passions of this great council of the nation were in no ordinary degree inflamed by their disappointment, because the officers, whom they had sent, had not brought Jesus with them, he dared to inquire of them, “*doth our law judge any man before it heareth him, and knoweth what he doeth?*” (John vii. 51.) And after the crucifixion, we find him with Joseph of Arimathea, taking the body of Jesus from the cross; and with all preparations for embalming it, carrying it to the sepul-

chre. (John xix. 38—42.) I have no doubt that, like Joseph, he had long been a disciple, but *secretly, through fear of the Jews*; and touching indeed is the fact, that afraid as he was, during the life of our Lord, to acknowledge him, he had not only the courage, but the affection, to pay this last tribute to him, when without doubt he believed, that he would see him no more. With such dispositions, he must soon have become a professor of christianity; and we may believe, has long enjoyed its ineffable rewards, in that celestial kingdom which will continue forever.

We said that the Jews commonly applied the expressions to

a proselyte, "*he is as a new born child*;" "*he has a new soul*." But the sentiment was not peculiar to the Jews. The author of the Institutes of Menu, who flourished 1280 years before our Lord, says, "of him who gives natural birth, and of him who gives knowledge of the whole Veda, the giver of sacred knowledge is the more venerable father; since *the second, or divine birth, insures life to the twice born*; life in this world, and hereafter eternally."

See Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. on the text. Hammond on Matth. iii. 1. Jennings's Jewish Antiq. v. p. 139, and Maurice's Indian Antiq. v. 5.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION AS A SOURCE OF ERROR.

It has been supposed by many that all error in opinion originates in the wickedness of the human heart. This opinion is believed to be itself not only erroneous, but the source of much mischief in the christian world. It may therefore be important to bring to view other occasions of error beside that of a wicked heart or opposition to the truth. We shall begin with the influence of education.

Human beings come into the world in a state of total ignorance. They have not one idea of God or duty, of virtue or vice, of truth or error. Every degree of knowledge they afterwards possess is acquired. As soon as they are capable of understanding language, they are equally, capable of receiving information that is true, and infor-

mation that is false. In a state of childhood they are necessarily dependent on their parents and others around them for the instructions they receive. If nothing be said to them respecting God, their own souls, or a future state, they will probably have no opinions, and no ideas relating to these subjects during the term of childhood. But if their parents endeavor to impress on their minds any ideas relating to God, whatever is taught for truth will be regarded as such.

If one child be instructed to believe that the *sun* is the Maker and Governor of all things, and that he goes round the earth every day to bestow favors, and to see what men are doing, the child will receive this for unquestionable truth; and every time he sees the sun he will think that

he sees God. If another child be told that the *sky* is the God of heaven and earth, and that the stars are his *eyes*, he will as readily admit this for truth as any other information that could be given him. So whatever instructions are given to the child relating to Jesus Christ, to angels, or to men, whether true or false, they will be regarded as true, until other information shall be obtained. If false instructions only be given, and these often repeated and urged as of great importance, a child may be led to regard the grossest absurdities with a kind of religious awe and veneration. Even if his heart were as pure as Gabriel's, he might be made to believe that his salvation depended on kissing the toe of a senseless image; or that killing a serpent would be an unpardonable sin, and that eating a harmless egg would occasion instant death. By the same kind of influence, a child may be brought to regard the Bible with horror, and to believe that reading a single page in it would seal his eternal ruin; while at the same time he might be made to regard the Alcoran as the book of life.

Why do the followers of Mahomet hazard their lives by a pilgrimage to Mecca? Why does the Hindoo believe it to be meritorious to expose himself to be crushed to death by the wheels of the car on which his Idol is placed? The influence of education accounts for these and a thousand other things equally absurd and abhorrent in the view of a christian. To the same kind of influence we may ascribe

the attachment of every class of pagans to the opinions and ceremonies which have been held sacred by their ancestors. Some of the learned in each class may rise above vulgar prejudices, by acquaintance with books or teachers of different persuasions. But with the greater part of people, the prepossessions of childhood are as durable as life.

The same observations will apply to the different sects of christians. If a child be educated a papist, he will be a papist of course; as a papist he will live and die, unless by some means he shall be favored with different instructions. If the child be taught to regard all protestants as heretics, as infidels, and reprobates, so he will view them and treat them, until something shall occur to make him suspect the correctness of his faith concerning their characters. On the same principle we may account for the strong prepossessions of protestants against the papists, and for the unreasonable opinion which many entertain, that all the Roman catholics are wicked and graceless persons.

Among protestants, the children of each sect naturally imbibe the opinions and the prejudices of their respective parents. The passages of scripture which are employed in support of the distinguishing sentiments of the parent will be so explained and understood by his children, until they shall be able and disposed to examine carefully, and to judge for themselves; but with the greater part, this perhaps will not take place during their residence on earth. If the pa-

rents of one sect are candid and friendly towards those of other sects, the children will naturally partake of this amiable spirit. But if the prejudices of a parent are so violent as to lead him to treat other sects as enemies, and to load them with reproach and abuse, his children will be likely to follow his example, until, in some way or other, they shall be better informed.

A great portion of adult persons in every sect, are incapable of such an investigation as would be necessary to decide with any certainty on the questions in debate between different sects. They rely on their teachers for explanations of scripture language, whether right, or wrong. The opinions and the prejudices of public teachers are imbibed by the parents who attend on their ministry, and are by them communicated to their children.

The influence of education will account for the extraordinary facts which are witnessed in every age, namely, that some men of the most amiable characters, and excellent talents are found advocates for opinions which shock the minds of others by their absurdity or self contradiction. Thus even a Paschal could acquiesce in the doctrine of transubstantiation, in opposition to the testimony of his own senses. Had he been educated a protestant, it would probably have been impossible to persuade him to admit the doctrine. But as he had been taught from his childhood to regard it as a "sacred mystery" and to rely on the infallibility of the papal church, he acquiesced in the doctrine

without any apparent hesitancy. Thus some other doctrines, which have much less apparent support from the Bible, have been admitted by great and good men, as true and essential; although no one knows what is meant by them, or in what sense they are to be understood as true.

It is owing to the influence of education that it is so difficult to propagate the gospel among the heathen, without the aid of miracles. It is probable that heathens, as well as christians, feel a veneration for the doctrines and traditions which have for ages been held sacred by their fore-fathers. How should *we* feel, if heathen teachers should come among us to persuade us to abandon christianity and adopt their religion? In a similar manner it is to be supposed pagans and mahometans feel on seeing our missionaries. We are therefore not to wonder if much time, wisdom, fortitude, and perseverance should be found necessary to convert a small province, district, or tribe.

It is the same kind of influence which closes the eyes of every sect of christians against all the light which may be offered to convince them of their respective errors. There are doubtless a few persons in almost every sect, who have become so sensible of their own fallibility, as to lie open to conviction, and to be willing to receive light. But in general people of every sect feel a great degree of confidence in the rectitude of the opinions they received by education. Besides, in too many instances children not only imbibe a confidence in

the opinions they receive from their parents, but also a deep rooted prejudice against christians of other sects. This confidence and these prejudices united, form an almost impregnable fortress against conviction.

When it shall be duly considered how naturally and even necessarily, children imbibe the errors of their parents, before they are capable of judging for themselves; and how obvious it is that they as readily admit truth as error, if it be only stated to them; must it not be astonishing that any man of learning and

discernment, who has the least claim to be considered as a person of candor, should be able to make himself believe that all error in opinion results from criminal affections of heart? Unless this belief be itself the fruit of education, it may as rationally be ascribed to depravity of heart as almost any opinion which can be named. For no opinion is more unreasonable and disingenuous, or more mischievous in its tendency.—Some other occasions of error may hereafter be illustrated.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A GENTLEMAN IN LISBON, TO HIS FRIEND IN BOSTON.

MY DEAR SIR,

Lisbon, 26th Jan. 1814.

"I do not know that I can say much concerning Lisbon, that will be interesting to you.—If you were here, I dare say you would first take a moral view of the city; and this aspect certainly furnishes fruitful topics for reflection. Every church in the place is R. Catholic, without exception; no other being tolerated; although I have been informed, that by a recent treaty, the English have obtained leave to erect a church, on condition that it resemble a dwelling-house externally, and have no bell. The episcopal service is now allowed in one of the rooms at the residence of the English minister plenipotentiary. The doors are open to any person that chooses to attend. I assure you this service was very refreshing to me;

and I cannot but regret that so few of my countrymen are disposed to avail themselves of its advantages. The officiating clergyman is a very reputable man and good preacher. This is the only deviation from the established worship of the place, which the laws allow. With regard to the inhabitants, I would not judge them severely, and my means of information have been very limited. But from what I have seen and heard, I believe a large proportion of them consider religion as a mere mechanical employment. In their churches, I have seen but very little indication of mental engagement or occupation. I must however except a few women, whom I have occasionally seen apparently laboring under strong mental exercises. It is

very seldom that sermons are delivered in the churches, and it is difficult to distinguish the Sabbath, from other days. I have heard well attested anecdotes, which would be ludicrous, if not connected with so serious a subject. A person on the very point of plunging deep in guilt, hearing the bells, which announced the approach of the host, very conscientiously walked to the window, and knelt, till it had passed, and then very deliberately returned to accomplish the crime which had been suspended by this sacred procession. I am morally certain, that a great change in the religious state of this people must ere long take place. The clergy and religious orders are fast falling into general contempt. Perhaps they deserve it;—I know they have been seen at public gambling houses, and it is said they are sometimes met at houses of still worse repute. This may have been the case formerly; but then they were shielded from reproach by the terrors of the Inquisition. But now the populace insult them most grossly and with impunity, when they meet them abroad. It is by no means uncommon. I confess I did not much lament it, when first assured of the fact; but on more mature deliberation I feel anxious for the issue. I am satisfied the present fabric will be changed, but I see no means in operation to furnish a substitute. I fear the transition will be from a bad religion to atheism. I am sure the great

mass of the people must be wholly ignorant of the New Testament. I have endeavored to purchase a Portuguese Bible, but can find only two editions;—one printed collaterally with the vulgate in 4 vols. 4to—the other by the help of notes is extended through 23 vols. 12mo;—and both are so very high that few people could afford to purchase them, if disposed. However the work is God's, and he will certainly bring light out of this thick darkness. I think there has also been a great change in the feelings of the *religieuse*. Whenever I have visited their churches or convents, I have been treated with great courtesy. They always shew us all that we wish to see, and never exact from us any observances of their peculiarities or habits. We have certainly overrated their bigotry in some respects. In the library of the convent of St. Vincents I was shewn French editions of some of the most dangerous English writers;—I was also shewn a French edition of Tillotson's sermons;—the works of Luther, &c. A few days since, I visited the palace of the Marquis of Abrantes, now a prisoner in France. On entering his private library I saw Hammond's Commentary;—Chillingworth's works; Tillotson's, Clark's, and South's Sermons, and also many other English divines, and a substantial body of English literature. The more I see of this world, the more I bless God, that I was born in New England."

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE SEEKERS IN INDIA.

To those who wish the propagation of christianity throughout the world, it must be gratifying to hear of any facts or circumstances favorable to that object. The particulars we are about to state will be collected partly from a paper in the "Asiatic Researches," written by Charles Wilkins, Esq. in 1781, and partly from the Edinburgh Review of a sketch of the Sikhs, written by Lt. Col. Malcolm, published in London 1812. In the former work the people are called Seekers; in the later, Sikhs. The two authors likewise differ in spelling the name of the founder of this sect. Mr. Wilkins calls him Naneeek Sah; Col. Malcolm "Nanae Shah." He "was born in the year of Christ 1469."

Mr. Wilkins informs that he attended public worship at the College of this sect. After some description of the hall in which they met, he proceeds thus; "The congregation arranged themselves upon the carpet on each side of the hall so as to leave a space before the altar from end to end. The great book, desk and all, was brought with some little ceremony from the altar, and placed at the opposite extremity of the hall. An old man with a reverend silver beard, kneeled down before the desk with his face towards the altar; and on one side of him sat a man with a small drum, and two or three with cymbals. The book was now opened, and the old man began to chant to the time of the drum and the cymbals; and at the conclusion of every verse,

most of the congregation joined chorus in a response, with countenances exhibiting great marks of joy.—The subject was a hymn in praise of the *unity*, the *omnipresence* and *omnipotence* of the Deity. I was singularly delighted with the gestures of the old man. I never saw a countenance so expressive of infelt joy.—The hymn being concluded, which consisted of about twenty verses, the whole congregation got up and presented their faces with joined hands towards the altar, in the attitude of prayer. A young man now stood forth, and with a loud and distinct accent solemnly pronounced a long prayer, or kind of liturgy; at certain periods of which all the people joined in a general response, saying *Wa Gooroo!*

They prayed against temptation; for grace to do good; for the general good of mankind; a particular blessing to the Seekers; and for the safety of those who at that time were on their travels. This prayer was followed by a short blessing from the old man, and an invitation to the assembly to partake of a friendly feast."

By conversing with the Seekers Mr. Wilkins was informed, that the sacred book, written by the founder of the sect, "teaches that there is but one God, omnipotent and omnipresent; filling all space and pervading all matter; and that he is to be worshipped and invoked. That there will be a day of retribution, when virtue will be rewarded and vice punished—That it not only commands

toleration, but forbids disputes with those of another persuasion. That it forbids murder, theft, and such other deeds as are, by the majority of mankind, esteemed crimes in society; and inculcates the practice of the virtues; but particularly an universal philanthropy, and a general hospitality to strangers. This is all my short visit would permit me to learn of this book. It is a folio volume, containing about four or five hundred pages."

In the *Edinburgh Review* of Col. Malcolm's "Sketch of the Sikhs," this people are represented as a "great nation in India" which "occupy a grand division of its territory"—"by far the most valuable part of that extensive territory which constituted the Mogul empire in its proudest days."

Nanac, the founder of the Sikhs, "endeavored to conciliate both Hindoos and Moslems to his doctrine, by persuading them to reject those parts of their respective beliefs and usages, which he contended were unworthy of that God whom they both adored."

This reformer also "endeavored with all the power of his genius, to impress both Hindoos and Muhammedans with a love of toleration and an abhorrence of war; and his life was as peaceable as his doctrine."—"In a period of two centuries the doctrines of Nanac extended their dominion in peace; nor was it till cruelties had been exercised upon them by the Mahomedans that his followers betook themselves to measures of revenge or defence."

After the disciples of Nanac had suffered these cruelties from the Mahomedans, Guru Govind arose, as the leader of this once pacific people. He gave them a new character, "not by making any material alteration in the tenets of Nanac, but by establishing institutions and usages which, by abolishing all distinction of castes, destroyed at one blow a system of polity that from being interwoven with the religion of a weak and bigotted race, fixed the rule of its priests upon a basis that had withstood the shock of ages." By the distinction of castes a great portion of the Hindoos were kept in a state of servility and suffering. The plan adopted by Govind; of abolishing these distinctions and opening a common highway to wealth and honor, naturally secured a multitude of disciples. "The peculiar disciples of the martial patriarch, Guru Govind, are all devoted to arms, though not all soldiers."—"A portion of the Sikhs profess to hold exclusively the doctrines of the original founder of the sect, and are exempted from the exercise of arms."

It has not been our object to give a particular history of this sect, which has become a nation in India; but to mention such facts as afford ground to hope that the efforts to introduce christianity among the natives in that part of the world will not be in vain. "The Sikhs are in fact Hindus," says the Reviewer, "with certain important differences, introduced by a recent and extraordinary change in

their religious and civil institutions." The success of Nanac shows that the habits and prejudices of the Hindoos are not so immutably fixed as many in Great Britain have imagined. The pacific character of Nanac, and the approach of his doctrines to those of christianity, are circumstances remarkable and important; and we need more information on the subject, than we now possess, to account for them without the aid of inspiration. As the dispersion of the Jews facilitated the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles in various parts of the world, so the existence of the Seekers may yet facilitate the spread of the gospel in

India. It is devoutly to be desired, that nothing may be done on the part of Christians to introduce their religion among the nations of India, which shall tend to impress a belief that Christianity is less tolerant, mild and pacific, or in any respect less worthy of reception, than the religion of Nanac. Besides, the account we have of the principal doctrines of the Seekers, should excite our gratitude to the common Father of our race, that he has, in one way or another, diffused some correct ideas of himself, more extensively than has been generally known or supposed by Christians.

THE SABBATH DAY OF A CHRISTIAN.

As the great value of the Sabbathical institution, unquestionably results from its tendency to preserve sentiments of religion in the community; and to secure and facilitate the religious instruction of the christian world; the true christian will always cherish in his own mind and inculcate upon others, an habitual persuasion of the religious distinction of this day. It will be a principal with him, so to make his worldly arrangements as not to encroach unnecessarily on that leisure which the day requires, in order best to effect those spiritual and moral purposes for which it was originally established.

Hence he does not begin with wasting in sleep a greater portion of this day, than of other days in the week. The light of this morning is to him peculiarly

grateful. He praises God that the Sun of righteousness has arisen on mankind with healing in his wings, and sheds on so many hearts, the influence of that heavenly rest, which remains for the people of God. His exercises of devotion both in his family and in private, are more lively than common; and he begins the day as if it were a festival in honor of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath. He does not this day allow any extraordinary time to the business of personal decoration, as if he were to distinguish this day by new sacrifices to vanity and external appearance. His family are not compelled to occupy themselves this morning in more than common preparations, but if, as every well informed christian will admit, the mind ought always to be rea-

dy for the exercises of religion, it would be a shame that the body should be unusually unprepared for a decent attendance on public worship. From this duty no trifling excuse will detain the christian. Much less will he prepare or provide impediments; but he laments the preventions which sometimes occur. He takes care too that those who belong to him should feel it a serious privation to be detained from the house of God.

Hitherto he goes, then, not in quest of amusement, nor with a difficult taste, which exposes him to frequent disappointment; but with a strong feeling of obligation, and a controlling sentiment of reverence. He goes not to *hear* only, but to take a part in services, in which he feels a personal interest. His deportment in the house of God is uniformly serious, never marked by impatience, listlessness or indecorum. He is ever desirous to inspire in those about him that reverence which he feels himself. His example tends to impress the strong conviction, that he fears the God in whose presence he worships, and forgets not that holiness becomes his house forever.

The interval of service is not given up by him as a broken space of time, to be got rid of by rambling without an object, or in making unnecessary visits. He and his family are at home; but not engaged in vain recreations. He endeavors to impress them with the value of this time for religious and moral improvement, and sets them the example of suitable occupations. Nor does

he allow himself to calculate on this day for the reception of company: his arrangements are made for quiet and domestic entertainment, never for extraordinary conviviality. He does not solicit the company even of his friends, nor does he refuse it, when it does not interfere with the religious duties of this holy season.

When the hour of service returns, he is again prepared for the worship of God, and appears again with his family and friends, and with the multitude of those who keep holy time. He does not send his family on a service, in which he does not care to engage himself, nor think of discharging by proxy, his obligations to God and society.

The remainder of the day, he devotes to moral and intellectual improvement. Then he is at leisure for the most interesting and salutary of his domestic and religious duties. His mind fresh from divine worship, and filled with contemplations of God and eternity, and warmed with sentiments of pure religion, is prepared to examine itself, and hold communion with God.

This day is admirably adapted to the purpose of instructing children and dependents; and no employment can be better suited to its religious character than the education of the young. If these opportunities are neglected, it is pretty certain, no others will be thus employed. What sight on earth, O ye parents, can be compared to a collected family, looking up to the common Father of parents and children, catching the first no-

tions of religion, the first rays of religious truth, from the world of holiness and quiet, on this day which brings us so peculiarly within the sphere of heaven's rest and blessings, within the circle of God's family! On this day the pupils of Christianity seem collected under their common Master; and christendom seems changed into a vast school of virtue. Will you not then embrace this tranquil season to teach your children to know and love their Father who is in heaven, to direct them how to pray to him, to make them feel his sacred presence, to inform them of their offences against him, and their need of pardon, to impress their minds with a sense of their obligations, to open to them the wonders of the scripture history, so interesting to young minds; to lead their curious thoughts to the history of Jesus Christ, his miracles, his sufferings, his death, and his wonderful resurrection; to inquire into the impressions they may have received from the

public exercises, to remove every injurious prejudice which may be forming; to suppress every springing evil, and to drop the seeds of eternal truth and goodness? These, these are the employments which sanctify the day, which uphold religion in the world, which save thousands from the wreck of everlasting destruction. These are employments for which fathers and mothers may well wish to live; and these insure the continuance and utility of religious institutions.

If any christian observer of the Sabbath, has no family or children to employ his sunday leisure, he is at no loss for occupations. For how vast is the field of religious meditation, how various the means of intellectual knowledge, how infinite the sphere of mercy full of occupations proper for the day! We can only pity the man to whom these hours seem to pass on leaden wing, and who complains of the Sabbath, "what a weariness is it!"

MUTATIONS OF ORTHODOXY AND HERESY. No. III.

"JESUS CHRIST by his death and sufferings, made atonement for the *elect only*." *View of Religions, article Calvinists.* This was reputed orthodoxy until within half a century; and it was one of the "five" capital doctrines from which Arminius dissented. His supposed heresy, relating to this article, consisted in believing, "that Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of ALL

MANKIND in general, and of every individual in particular: that however, none but those who believe in him can be partakers of the divine benefit." *View of Religions, article Arminians.*

The difference was this; those who were reputed orthodox, believed that Jesus died only for a *select part* of mankind; while those reputed heretical believed that he died for *all*, without distinction. But whatever may

have been the cause of the change, whether it be owing to the progress of darkness, or to the progress of light, so it in fact is, that what was formerly esteemed heresy, is now esteemed orthodoxy. Thus we are taught by the orthodox of the present day:—"The Redeemer has made an atonement sufficient to expiate for the sins of the whole world; and in this sense has tasted death for every man, has taken away the sin of the world, has given himself a ransom for all, and is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, so that whosoever believeth in him may be saved." Hopkins' System, vol. i, p. 527. That Dr. Hopkins was not alone in this belief, is well known; and that we are correct in saying that such is the orthodoxy of the present day, may appear from an article in the creed of our Theological Institution:—"I believe—that Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the office of a Prophet, Priest, and King; that agreeably to the covenant of redemption, the Son of God, and he alone, by his suffering and death, has made atonement for the sins of ALL MEN." Const. p. 38.

These things are not stated with any desire to cast reproach on our pious forefathers, or on those of their orthodox children, who admit for truth, what the fathers believed to be heresy. But we wish all our readers to become sensible of the danger of being unduly influenced by names as mutable and indefinite in their application. We wish them to regard all men as fallible, and to fix on some better criterion to

distinguish between good and bad men, than the names which party spirit uses for party purposes. These names, as they have been used in past ages, and in the present age, have served to bewilder the minds of men, to prevent impartial inquiry, and to keep alive the fire of contention among those who ought to have felt towards each other as members of the same body. That such has been the case must be evident to intelligent and reflecting men of every denomination; and it is hoped that those of every sect, in whom real religion rises above party spirit, will be induced to employ their influence to put an end to such delusion and wickedness.

This number does not close the subject of *mutations*; but enough has already been exhibited to afford ground for the following serious caution.—As those who now claim the honors of orthodoxy, have evidently rejected several opinions which their pious forefathers regarded as *essential* articles of faith, and have adopted several opinions which their ancestors denounced as "damnable heresies;" these circumstances should excite them to be cautious and sparing of their denunciations, lest their children should be involved in their unqualified censures, and have occasion to regret that their fathers had so small a share of candor, prudence, and gospel humility. For it is certainly *possible*, that pious posterity may be constrained to imitate the example of the modern Reformers of the orthodox creed, and make still farther amendments, by excluding

some articles which are now considered essential, and supplying their places with opposite opinions. How many of the rising generation may have occasion to say each one for himself, "I hope my father was a good man, but he was too self-confident, and

too uncharitable—could he have had his will, some great errors would have been perpetuated in the church to the end of time, and some very pious men would have been forever regarded as heretics or infidels!"

THE SUPERSTITION OF INFIDELS.

For the Christian Disciple.

MR. EDITOR,

Every moralist has remarked the descending tendency of example. It passes from a father to his children; from masters to servants;—from a king to his courtiers, and from courtiers to the people. An infidel king will be surrounded by an infidel court; and infidelity and licentiousness will descend to the people. Such was the court of Frederick the Great. In the "original anecdotes," which are published of him, I do not find a person named, who can be suspected of piety;—but I have not been a little interested in the remark, that although nothing like religion was to be found near the person of the infidel king, we have more than one example of a gross and debasing superstition, among these distinguished modern philosophers. Almost every one who has exercised his attention upon the characters and conduct of those about him, has remarked, I suppose, that in proportion as men in common life are ignorant of religion, they are inclined to superstition; but this tendency of the mind is not less remarkable in those, who are called enlightened, and who have

reasoned themselves, or have been reasoned by others, out of their faith in revelation. As a few examples in point are brought together, in the "anecdotes" which Mr. Thiebault has published of the Prussian monarch, I beg leave to lay them before the readers of the Disciple.

But let me first relate the circumstance, which occasioned the paragraph to which I have alluded.

"M. de Kleist, with several other persons, all occupying distinguished places under government, met with a man who pretended to have the power of forcing the devil to reveal the secret places, where all the treasures were buried, which had formerly disappeared in Germany. They formed an honorable association among themselves, for the purpose of obtaining the minutest information, relative to so valuable a secret; paid a large consideration for the supposed discovery; and promised, in addition, a part of the profit to the person from whom they obtained it.

"From this time, there was no act of extravagance, which their conductor did not impose upon

them. All the mummeries which are to be found in the stories of the *sabbath of witches*, were practised by them with the greatest solemnity and mystery. They conjured and exorcised the devil in all sorts of ways, at all hours of the night, and in the most desert places. A variety of sacrifices to the devil were required, which cost large sums of money; and among others, that of immolating a perfect goat, which should not have a single hair that was not black. At length, after searching the Prussian provinces, all Poland, Lithuania &c. to the great joy of our exorcists, a perfect goat was found. The price which he cost was, his weight in gold; and he was led to the slaughter, with all possible solemnity. Praises were lavished on the devil; but he was either deaf, or had no treasures to discover; and this great enterprise, which cost immense sums of money to the associates, left them nothing, but the promise which they made to each other in separating, of the most inviolable secrecy. But what secret can elude the penetration of a woman of address, when she has an interest in the discovery? The beautiful Kleist obtained the secret; and bound herself by no promise not to disclose it,—or rather, let me say, forgot the promise which she made in my favor.”

Then comes the paragraph.

“Every one must naturally be astonished that men of rank, some of them men of understanding and talents, should have been capable of such weakness! And still more so when it is consider-

ed that it was in the reign of Frederick, in his court, and even near his person, that men who both heard and admired him, were the dupes of so disgraceful an imposture. This then is a picture of human nature. On the same canvass with this philosophical king, we view a Lamethrie, the apostle of universal materialism, making the sign of the cross, if it does but thunder!—Maupertuis, who does not believe in God, says his prayers regularly every evening on his knees!—D’Argens, a still firmer infidel, shudders if he counts the number thirteen around the table!—The princess Amelia, the favorite sister of Frederick, almost as much of a philosopher as himself, and endowed with almost as strong an intellect, is the dupe of fortune tellers!—And *full half* the court are credulous to the story of the woman all in white, who appeared in one of the apartments of the castle, holding in her hand a large broom, with which she swept the apartment, when any member of the royal family was to die in the course of the year! O race of human kind, of what hast thou the front to boast thyself?”

Yes, M. Thiebault, “this is a picture of human nature.” We should look for precisely such persons, in the court of the great Frederick. You think it wonderful, that such contradiction of character should exist in philosophers; that so much superstition should be found in those, who were near the infidel king, and who, like him, had renounced all religion. But the fact is, I believe, that there are

very few, who have ever believed in God, in his moral government, in revelation, and in eternity, who have been able, with all their exertions, wholly to overcome these convictions. They have deceived themselves for a time, by injurious sophisms; or have made conscience insensible, by hardihood in vice. But almost without exception have they at times felt, and deeply felt the fallacy of their own reasonings, and the guilt of their abandoned conduct; and in these moments, they are not unfrequently the most miserable slaves of the most debasing superstition. To my mind, not only do these, and all similar examples prove that religion is the great law of human nature, of which, with all the violence he can exert, man can with difficulty divest himself; but it is only by this principle, that we can satisfactorily account for these phenomena. And there is likewise a tendency in the human mind, at all times, to pass from one extreme to another. There are, it is said, in a single city of a catholic country, more infidels, than in all protestant Europe. Fanatics become unbelievers; and if infidels, in the moments of fear, do not become fanatics, they often

become not less weakly superstitious, than are many of the most unenlightened among men.

A very curious little book might be made of "*the superstition of infidels.*"

I think that it was Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who, having prepared his book, one object of which was to prove that christianity cannot be true, because it rests on the evidence of miracles;—assures his reader, that before he committed it to the press, he knelt and prayed to God, that if the doctrines maintained in his book were true, he would give him a sign from heaven. At this moment, says the credulous unbeliever, when the sky was without a cloud, I distinctly heard a sound, which I was persuaded was an intimation from God, that my book should be given to the world. Thus was a miracle adduced to support the credit of a book, which was written against miracles. I quote this fact from memory; but I think that it may be found in the preface of Lord Herbert's book, and in Leland's view of deistical writers.

Perhaps other, and not less striking examples, might be suggested by some other of your readers.

IMPORTANT INQUIRIES RELATING TO DUTY.

For the Christian Disciple.

MR. EDITOR,

I was much gratified with the judicious and interesting remarks on sacred music, in the number for July. I regard the singing of sacred hymns in our religious

assemblies, one of the most sublime acts of veneration to the Deity. Though the worshipper be unable to lift up his voice with the choir, yet his heart and

affections are in unison with his fellow worshippers, and the devout praise is supposed to ascend as from one mouth, and from one mind.

Every pious and well enlightened christian is sensible of the obligations we are under to celebrate the praises of the Supreme Being, and of the edification and pleasure arising from such a devout exercise, when conducted in a proper manner. "In this sacred employment, particular care should be taken that nothing be introduced which shall clash with the sentiments, or hurt the feelings of any sincere christian. This is evident from the very nature of social prayer and praise, in which it is requisite that every member of a religious assembly should be able to join, and consequently, from which every thing of a doubtful or disputable kind ought to be removed." To the truth of these sentiments, Dr. Watts has given his ample testimony. In his preface to the Psalms, he says, "Nor have I confined my expressions to any particular party or opinion; that in words prepared for public worship, and for the lips of multitudes, there might not be a syllable offensive to sincere christians, whose judgments may differ in the lesser matters of religion." Similar sentiments are found in his preface to the Hymns: "The contentious and distinguishing words of sects and parties are secluded, that whole assemblies may assist at the harmony, and different churches join in the same worship, without offence." That the Dr. was not sufficiently attentive to these declarations in

the composition of his psalms and hymns, has been felt by many sincere followers of Jesus. Very many instances readily occur, in which the expressions are not suited to the condition of christians, and many in which the opinions of a sect are offered in their most offensive form. The same may be said of other writers of hymns, whose productions have been introduced into public worship. That psalmody may produce the beneficial effects of which it is capable, may dispel from the mind improper objects, may elevate our devotion, and engage our hearts in rational homage to the great Supreme, much care and a sacred regard to the feelings of every christian worshipper ought to be had in assigning the hymn or psalm to be sung. Has not too little attention been paid in accommodating christians of different opinions, in this part of social worship? There is perhaps scarcely a congregation, in which the feelings of some would not be wounded by introducing what is peculiar even to the most prevailing sect. As in many congregations, some serious christians are often called upon to unite in devotion, and in expression of sentiments doubtful, unintelligible, or incredible, and their feelings severely tried and wounded; what is the duty of the dissenter in this case? May he utter these sentiments in his praise to God, silently withholding his assent? May he substitute other sentiments in their room, and put on the appearance of uniting with his fellow worshippers? Is it proper that he

express signs of disapprobation, or of not uniting in the devotion by some alteration of his posture or otherwise? Or, is it his duty to withdraw himself from such assembly, though he may thereby be deprived of all the advantages and pleasures of public worship? Mr. Editor, by pointing out the path of duty in this,

which is not a supposed, but the real case of many serious and upright christians, and by removing the stumbling block out of the way, you will very much oblige a CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

The above inquiries demand attention; and perhaps some of our correspondents will furnish a prudent and satisfactory answer.

REMARKABLE INSCRIPTIONS.

THE following Inscription on the Monument at Madras, erected to the memory of the Rev. Mr. Swartz, the Danish Missionary, was dictated by the Court of Directors of the East India Company. We doubt whether history furnishes an Inscription more honorable. Any man who is worthy of such a memorial, may look down with profound pity on all the mighty conquerors of nations, whose names and whose deeds have embellished or disgraced the annals of mankind.

In the history of the Macedonian Alexander, and many other conquerors, we see men sailing in imaginary glory, on the waves of human woe, produced by their own murderous deeds. In the Inscription before us, we see the *Image* of HIM who came, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them: of HIM who made a sacrifice of himself for the benefit and salvation of others.

INSCRIPTION.

"Sacred to the Memory of the Rev. Frederick Christian Swartz, whose life was one continued effort to imitate the example of his blessed Master. Employed as a Protestant Missionary from

the Government of Denmark, and in the same character, by the Society in England for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, he, during a period of FIFTY YEARS, went about doing good; manifesting in respect to himself the most entire abstraction from temporal views, but embracing every opportunity of promoting both the temporal and eternal welfare of others. In him, religion appeared not with a gloomy aspect or forbidding mien, but with a graceful form and placid dignity.

"Among the many fruits of his indefatigable labors, was the erection of a Church at Tanjore. The savings from a small salary were for many years devoted to the pious work, and the remainder of the expense, supplied by individuals, at his solicitation. The Christian Seminaries at Ramnadporam, and in the Tinnevely Province, were established by him.

"Beloved and honored by Europeans, he was, if possible, held in still deeper reverence by the natives of this country, of every degree and every sect; and their unbounded confidence in his in-

tegrity and truth was, on many occasions, rendered highly beneficial to the public service. The poor and the injured looked up to him as an unfailing friend and advocate; the great and powerful concurred in yielding him the highest homage ever paid in this quarter of the globe, to European virtue.

"The late Hyder Ally Cawn, in the midst of a bloody and vindictive war with the Carnatic, sent orders to his officers, 'to permit the venerable Father Swartz to pass unmolested, and show him respect and kindness, for he is a holy man, and means no harm to my government.'

"The late Tuljaja, Rajah of Tanjore, when on his death bed, desired to entrust to his protecting care, his adopted son, Serfojee, the present Rajah, with the administration of all affairs of his country.

"On a spot of ground, granted to him by the same Prince, two miles east of Tanjore, he built a house for his residence, and

made it an Orphan Asylum. Here the last twenty years of his life were spent in the education and religious instruction of children, particularly those of indigent parents—whom he gratuitously maintained and instructed;—and here, on the 13th of Feb. 1798, surrounded by his infant flock, and in the presence of several of his disconsolate brethren, entreating them to continue to make religion the first object of their care, and imploring with his last breath the divine blessing on their labors, he closed his truly Christian career, in the 72d year of his age.

"The East India Company, anxious to perpetuate the memory of such transcendent worth, and gratefully sensible of the public benefits which resulted from its influence, caused this Monument to be erected, Ann. Dom. 1807." *Buch. Apol.* pp. 196—197.

"Review of Buchanan's Apology," *Christ. Observer*, Nov. 1813.

POETRY.

HYMN FOR SUNDAY MORNING.

HARK! 'tis the music of the striking bell,
That calls the Christian to divine delight!
The gentle breeze conveys the holy swell,
While all around reposing, soothes the sight.

God of the world! I bend before thy throne!
Thou, only thou, canst fill my soul's desires:
I would enjoy the thought of thee alone,
And hide all earthly flames in heavenly fires.

How sweetly on this soul-reviving day,
 Kind nature wakes the mind to views of joy;
 And o'er its feelings, holding gentle sway,
 Speaks of eternal bliss without alloy.

For while I gaze on Summer's glittering field,
 Brilliant with life, smiling with joy and love,
 I feel that soon to Winter's frown will yield,
 That *constant* beauty only dwells above.

For though the sun, now sparkling, cheers my sight,
 A moment since, his form was wrapt in shade,—
 In heaven the Sun of glory will delight
 With not a cloud his glowing rays to fade.

The blossoms which expand in this frail hour,
 Will shortly loose their richest sweets, and die,
 There, life will flourish with unceasing power,
 And death's cold blast, with all its murmurs fly.

That sound again! I come, my God, with joy,
 To yield my prayers and praises all to thee!
 Oh! be they still on earth, my loved employ,
 Till welcome angels set my spirit free.

Then mingling in their ever tuneful song,
 Whose sacred warbling speaks of love divine,
 My lips and heart transported shall prolong
 The note, my Saviour, which confirms me thine!

June 12th, 1814.

CONTENTIONS AMONG CHRISTIANS LAMENTED.

CHRISTIANS, alas! who ought to lead the way,
 And shine as lights, in this eventful day,
 Are seen too oft by warring passions driven,
 Pursuing strife, as the straight road to heaven.

Quarrels which long had slept, or known to few,
 Are conjured up, and blazed to public view;
 Some sparks of local fire, in Satan's hand,
 Are blown to flames and spread through all the land.

By jealousy or art GOD'S GLORIOUS NAME
 Is rashly linked with *individual fame*,
 As though the cause of truth must sink or rise,
 As *one's* esteemed more simple, or more wise.

Forgive, O Lord, the follies which are past,
 Let not these scenes of strife forever last;
 Distil thy gracious influence from above,
 And fill the hearts of all with peace and love.

PACIFICUS.

EFFECTS OF VICE.

His morn of youth, how wondrous fair!
 How beauteous was his bloom!
 But ah! he strayed from virtue's paths,
 And pangs his life consume.

His wasted form, his livid eye,
 His haggard aspect pale,
 Of many a hidden, hideous vice,
 Recount a fearful tale. GELLERT.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

MISSIONS OF THE UNITED BRETHREN.

Of all the various sects of Christians there is perhaps no one which has done more, according to their numbers, to extend the blessings of the gospel, than the Moravians, or United Brethren. They deserve respect from the whole christian world, not merely on account of their missionary exertions, but for their inoffensive, pious, beneficent, and exemplary deportment as a religious sect. The following particulars relating to their settlements, missions, and recent sufferings, are extracted from the Christian Observer for December, 1813.

"The settlements of the United Brethren amount to 31, all established since the year 1732; and the number of missionaries employed in them is 157. They are situated as follows, viz. In West Indies, at St. Thomas, 2 settlements; at St. Croix 3; at St. Jan. 2; at Jamaica 3; at Antigua 3; at Barbadoes 1; at St. Kitts 1; in North America 4; in Labrador 3; in Greenland 3; in South Africa 2.

In the three Danish islands, their congregations amount to no less than 12,189 souls; and their number at Antigua is also estimated at 12,000. These missions have been supported by contributions from their congregations in Germany, and other places in Europe. But these pecuniary resources have been greatly diminished by the long and distressing wars in that quarter of the world. In addition to their sufferings in Germany, they met with a great loss in the conflagration

of Moscow, where they had a settlement.

In giving an account of their sufferings, they say, "We were exposed to the rage of the populace. All the magistrates had left the city, the preceding night. We were deprived of all protection and prospect of safety. We could only sigh, and cry for help to God, for all human help was gone. The 2d of September, the fate of our city was decided. Early in the morning we saw our army retreat through the city, which continued until towards evening, when the French army entered the Kremlin. Soon after the hostile soldiers came into our yard, and demanded provisions and lodging.—About 9 o'clock, we observed large fires rise in several parts of the city.—In the morning of the 4th, a troop of French light horse, with two officers, came galloping into our yard, and demanded bread with great violence, which was immediately given them—they took not only all the bread, but the whole stores from the baker.—About six in the evening, some of the troops rushed into our house, and immediately broke open the doors of our shop, rummaged every room, chest, and drawer; took all cloths and linen, and only left the clothes on our backs. While they were thus occupied, we perceived with terror, that an immense mass of fire was driven by a violent storm towards us, and that we had reason to fear every moment that it would seize

our dwelling. We therefore left the plunderers to themselves; and small and great left the premises just as we were, with a sensation which cannot be described. We went on, overwhelmed with terror; none could speak comfort to the other, for every one wanted it; no tear alleviated the oppression under which we groaned; and the lamentations of the Russian domestics who accompanied us, afforded a terrible contrast to our silent grief.

No sooner were we in the street, than a troop of horse met us, who plundered us most unmercifully, and tore the clothes from our backs.—The conflagration continued still, and about 2 o'clock in the morning, we saw to our grief our two stone built houses in flames. The plundering still continued, and our well-secured vault where we had removed all our stores of merchandize, and our whole substance, and walled it up, which had sustained no injury from the fire, was now broken open, and entirely emptied; whereby we at once lost all, and literally became beggars.

All the congregations of the Brethren in Upper Lusatia and Silesia have been exhausted by repeated requisitions and contributions. The settlement at Sarepta has been in part destroyed by fire; besides other calamities suffered by the congregations in Denmark and Saxony."

These and other facts relating to this benevolent and afflicted people, were stated in the Christian Observer, to awaken sympathy in England, and to obtain contributions for their relief. Unless other Christians will afford them some assistance, the missionary exertions of these Brethren must probably be in a great measure suspended. As they have been so long benefactors to their fellow men, and so disposed to devote their property to the service of God, it is believed that he will not forsake them in their adversity, but will excite compassion towards them in the hearts of other Christians, by which they will be enabled to pursue their benevolent course for the spreading of the gospel.

Extracts from Letters and Papers sent to the British and Foreign Bible Society.

AN old man upwards of 75 years of age (in Wales, 1812) has within 15 months, learned to read his Bible, and now rejoices in the privilege he enjoys at this late period of his existence. His wife, aged 72, is now learning her letters, in hope of enjoying the same privilege. On a late occasion she held out her hat, exclaiming "yes! I would rather read, than to have this hat full of gold."—A poor woman, near 60 years of age, has been taught to read her Bible within a few months, and takes delight in the practice, morning and evening.—When the arrival of the cart was announced, which carried the first sacred load of Bibles to a certain town in Wales, the people went out in crowds to meet it; welcomed it as the Israelites did the Ark of old; drew it into the town, and eagerly bore off every copy, as rapidly as they could be dispersed. The young people were to be seen consuming the whole night in reading it. Laborers carried it into the field, that they might enjoy it during the intervals of their labor.

A young man was bound to a weaver and bred a catholic. Having learned to read, and a New Testament happening to lie neglected in his master's house, it became the companion of his leisure hours. At the age of 21 he proposed going to see his brother, a militia man in Castlebar—he begged of his master to give him the Testament, as the reward of his faithful services. The master knowing his love for the book, refused giving it on any other terms, than six months' farther services. Hoping that he could get a Testament at Castlebar on easier terms, the young man declined giving the service demanded. But at Castlebar he sought in vain to find a Testament for sale. The Testament was never absent from his thoughts. He could not live without it—He could dream of nothing else. Finding no rest, he returned to his master, and agreed to serve him half a year for the Testament. By diligent reading,

he became a stedfast and exemplary protestant.

I became acquainted with the person of whom I am to write, about three years ago, when we were on duty in the yeomanry corps together; and sorry I was to find him lead a very dissolute life. The oaths he swore, and other dreadful language he used, very much hurt me, as he was my right hand man. One day, after much conversation with him, in which I stated to him the consequences of such a life, I resolved to try one expedient more; and while we were dismounted, I conveyed into his holsters a small Bible, which I always carried in my own. On leaving the field, he found the unwelcome intruder, and when we met again, the next morning, he asked me "If I knew that—book?" On my answering in the affirmative, he replied, "then I will cut it in pieces before your face;" which he did in an instant, with his sword; and ever after he shunned my company.—I now pass to the *finishing scene* of his life; observing only, that he lived two years after that, and spent the whole of his property in his former course; nor was I ever able to obtain any conversation with him untill after he was taken ill. I then visited him, and asked him what were his hopes and prospects in the view of death: he declared himself in a comfortable state. I inquired as to the source whence he derived his comfort, but I soon found my visit was very disagreeable, and left him. In a few days after, I called on him again, and asked him if he then read his Bible. He answered he had no Bible, nor could he borrow one. I fetched him one from my house, which I had received from the Society at Leicester. I read for some time in the Epistles, and he appeared to listen with much attention; he expressed his desire to purchase the Bible, but I made him a

present of it, and I left him with my mind very much distressed at some remarks he made, which I forbear to mention. It was a week or more before I saw or heard from him again; and during that interval he was removed into our work-house, where I had left several Bibles; in one of which he read, his own not being carried with him. I again visited him, and on entering the room I found him reading in Isaiah. On seeing me, he got upright in bed, clasped the book with both his hands, in a manner I shall never forget, and said, "O! Mr. H. that ever such a wretch as I should be permitted to read this blessed book! that book which you saw me cut in pieces, and which now has cut my sins in pieces, and led me to Christ my Savior. I have read those four chapters (I think the 50th, 51st, 52d, and 53d of Isaiah,) which you see are turned down, over and over again; blessed, blessed book! and a thousand thanks to that Society which caused this book to be placed within my reach! Blessed hour that, in which such Society was founded! O, if I could but recal my property and murdered time, all should be spent in distributing that blessed book." As I had the charge of his little remaining property, (being overseer of the poor,) he requested that what remained, after paying his funeral charges, should be given to the Auxiliary Bible Society; but none remained. I mention, Sir, his former life, to shew what the grace of God can effect: here were no means used, no minister or neighbor, except myself; nothing but the word of God. What a stimulus this, to every member of the Society! The poor man continued to repeat his testimony, for six weeks, and at last closed his eyes in peace, through the hope and consolation he had derived from the Scriptures.

Short History.

MEMORABLE EVENTS.

"Two Lieutenants, Roberts and Ross, of the United States Army, have been struck from the army rolls, for having given and accepted a challenge." *Col. Centinel*, Aug. 10, 1814.

New-Orleans, July 7th. The Editor of the Louisiana Gazette, has given "GENERAL NOTICE," that he "will not publish challenges, to fight duels, nor correspondence between

parties relative to them; nor articles in handbills, or otherwise, the evident tendency of which is to provoke to this kind of combat, or to charge gentlemen declining to engage, in it with cowardice." He very properly adds, "So frequent have duels become in this country, and so trifling and insignificant the sources from whence they originate, that honorable and high-minded men ought to be the last to engage in them." *Daily Ad. Aug. 10.*

"Died on Trase Creek, (Tenn.) Mr Charles Baker, in perfect health. He

was a wicked man, of turbulent passions, and much given to blasphemy. On the morning of his death, he attempted to make a calf suck a cow, that was not willing to do it. In the scuffle the calf made his escape. Mr. Baker, as was usual with him, pursued with the most blasphemous language, and suddenly fell down dead. As he fell, he exclaimed, *Lord have mercy on me!* and died as soon as if shot through the heart." *Ibid.*

Let the passionate and profane take warning, and repent.

Report of the Legislature of Massachusetts, on the observance of the Sabbath.

THE Committee appointed by both Houses to consider what further provision is necessary to enforce a due observance of the Lord's Day, and to whom were committed several petitions from the people on the subject, with leave to report by bill or otherwise, have attended to the duty assigned them, and respectfully offer the following

REPORT.

WE find a law passed March 8th, 1792, and another passed March 11th, 1797, the provisions of which extend not only to all the evils mentioned in the petitions, but to all such as are in any other way known to us to exist in regard to the outward observance of the Sabbath. The provisions of these two laws we think are sufficient to accomplish the end proposed, if they were faithfully and discreetly executed. The preamble to the first law is solemn, clear, and impressive. It states the design and use of the Lord's Day, in a manner well calculated to excite in the minds of the people, and of the officers named in the laws, a just sense of their responsibility and duty, and to stimulate them to corresponding efforts. The specifications and increased penalties, which follow, appear not to us to require further additions from the Legislature, until it shall appear from a fair experiment in executing the laws, that the evils are not removed.

But while we thus report that no further legal provisions are required

from this honorable body, we are still impressed with a deep sense of the extent and importance of the evil complained of, both by the clergy and the people, and are earnestly desirous to give all the aid in our power to the execution of the laws, by our renewed sanction, and the full expression of our sentiments and feelings.

We believe, that an enlightened, uniform and pious observance of the Lord's Day, in attending public and private instruction and worship ourselves, and in refraining from all actions and practices which may disturb the worship and instruction of others, is a duty solemnly binding upon the conscience of every individual. We believe that without the appointment and continuance of the Lord's Day, public instruction and worship would soon languish, and perhaps entirely cease: that private worship and the best virtues of social life would share the same fate: that the scriptures, containing the records, the principles, the duties, and the hopes of our religion, would soon pass from the recollection of multitudes of our citizens who now regard them, and never become known to the great body of the rising generation: that the powerful and happy influence which they now exert upon public sentiment and morals would be seen no longer: that the safety of the state, the moral and religious improvement of the people, the personal security and happiness of all, are inseparably, if not inseparably con-

nected with the uniform and conscientious observance of the Lord's Day, and its various institutions and services; and that we are all bound to make every just and proper effort to secure the execution of the laws which have been already made upon this important and interesting subject. However wisely and skilfully laws may be framed, they must greatly depend upon the public sentiment and virtue, and especially in all measures of a moral and religious character, for their final and complete success. We trust the public sentiment and virtue in this Commonwealth are sufficiently elevated and powerful to secure the execution of just laws for the observance of the Sabbath, when once the public mind shall be properly and simultaneously directed to this object, and to the reasons which enforce it.

We therefore recommend the following measures to be adopted by the Legislature.

That this report be printed, and a copy sent to each minister of every denomination in the Commonwealth.

That each minister be requested to read in his pulpit, on the Sabbath, the existing laws, for the due observance of the Lord's Day, and to address the people on the subject: pointing out as fully and explicitly as the occasion and circumstances of his people may

require, according to his own judgment, the importance and value of the Sabbath, and the reasons which bind us to observe it, and to obey the laws of the Commonwealth.

That the people be especially and distinctly called upon to elect such moral and religious men to fill the office named for the particular execution of the laws in regard to the Sabbath as shall give the public a rational confidence, that all proper means will be adopted to meet the just expectations of the Legislature, and of all the lovers of righteousness, peace, and order:

That the people be distinctly reminded of the necessity of supporting such public officers in the faithful discharge of their duty, by uniting and preserving the common sentiment in their favor, and not permitting it, by neglect or irritation, to turn against them to injure their reputation, business or happiness.

And that the officers themselves, who are or may be thus appointed, should be discreet, judicious, and benevolent, while they are yet honest and firm in the execution of their trust, according to the oath of office prescribed in the statute. All which is respectfully submitted, by order of the Committee.

D. A. WHITE, *Chairman.*

Ordinations.

AUGUST 12, 1814—Rev. Robert Crowell, as Pastor of the Third Church and Society at Ipswich. Introductory Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Thurston of Manchester. Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Abbot of Beverly. Ordaining Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Holt of Epping, N. H. Charge by the Rev. Dr. Dana of Ipswich. Right Hand of Fellowship by the Rev. Mr. Kimball of Ipswich. Concluding Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Emerson of Beverly.

AUGUST 27, 1814—Rev. Joseph Haven, as Pastor of the Congregational Church and Society in Dennis. Introductory Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Shaw of Eastham. Sermon by the Rev. Professor Ware of Cambridge. Ordaining Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Waterman of Barnstable. Charge by the Rev. Mr. Alden of Yarmouth. Fellowship of the Churches by the Rev. Mr. Simpkins of Brewster. Concluding Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Briggs of Chatham.

Candidates for the ministry in Cambridge and its vicinity.

Rev. Mr. Leonard, Boston.
Mr. William Popkin, Malden.
Mr. Joseph Field, Boston.
Mr. Lemuel Capen, Cambridge.

Mr. John E. Abbot, Boston.
Mr. David Reed, Cambridge.
Mr. Jonathan P. Dabney, do.
Mr. David Damon, do.
Mr. Hiram Weston, Duxbury.